

# How to Stay Sane During the Elections: Understanding Through the Lens of Chinese Medicine

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*Editor's Note:* This article is the author's perspective on current events. It is not an endorsement of any political candidate by the author or by *Acupuncture Today*.

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In Chinese Medicine philosophy, everything consists of Yin and Yang. The law of polar opposites - one cannot exist without its opposite. Donald Trump, in today's politics, could easily be classified as extremist with his statements (or attacks) on women or people of color, particularly regarding Muslims and immigrants.

At one point in our history not too long ago, these perspectives were commonplace. In today's politics, fortunately, these views have become extremist and cringe-worthy news. However, not all people find Trump's views to be extreme nor cringe-worthy, but from the theory of Yin and Yang, those who agree with Trump are necessary as is the existence of Trump.

Lets understand Yin and Yang theory a little better. Yin/Yang are opposites, but have special relationships to each other - the relationships of inter-transformation and interdependence. Lets take an example of Night (yin) and Day (yang). Night is at it's peak (most dark) between the hours of 11pm to 3am, give or take depending on the season and where you are in the world. Then, once 4am to 5am rolls around, night weakens and begins transforming into day. With the sun rising from the horizon to shed light on us, the day is born. This change repeats itself cyclically every 24 hours without a pause. This cycle of transformation occurs at the extreme points where it pivots between night and day and transforms into and births the other.

Trump can be interpreted as extreme from the more liberal, progressive perspective and likewise the conservatives perceiving the liberals as extreme, thus night and day. These two polar extremes in how conservatives and liberals view money, people, environment, foreign policy, and how our country should be run are necessary opposites to allow for transformation and birth. Trump's "night" extreme perspective is necessary to assist our politics to transform further in the opposing direction of "day." Trump, like the function of a Chinese herb, vents to the surface the darkness of what some may label "bigotry" that have existed for a very long time in our country and declared at the highest levels of politics. The transformation of night has been long overdue. With Trump running, it births Sanders ("day" or the opposing force) the opportunity to push our country in the direction to where it could be.

Trump represents what has been internally brewing and stagnating inside our body politic. In Chinese medicine, we have herbal formulas for that. In this prescription, if Trump were an herb, he would

serve to vent to the surface and release the toxicity in our body politic of intolerance and discrimination. And with the assistance of another Chinese herb (Sanders), would clear the toxicity away and aid in the healing of our body politic. That is just one analogy, I'm sure there are many other herbs we could compare these people to.

From this perspective however, all elements of the earth, including humans are part of the solution - interdependent of one another. Therefore, in times of controversy from this lens, we can respect differing perspectives because all exists in order to create the larger change we are looking for. Because both sides are always necessary in transformation, in other words, change cannot happen without difference. In the large context of it all, each of us serves as some vehicle for that change, whether we are a politician, stay at home mom, or your friendly morning barista.

In application to our daily life, we all can agree or disagree and continue in whatever "fight" or push toward the direction we believe to be better, even if it is seemingly opposing or extreme to others. In this "fight" however, having the inner peace of knowing that we are all part of that greater change in whatever capacity, is conducive to our health as a nation and individually.

It is yet to be known where we will end up politically, but wherever it does, no fret, the cycle of change will continue without a pause. No need to stagnate your liver qi just because there are opposing forces. We live in exciting pivotal times on the verge of inter-transformation so stay sane, keep calm and yin yang.

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